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COPY TO CAIRO
FOR INFORMATION

March 28, 1947

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No.

To the

Officer in Charge of the American Mission,
London.

The Department desires that the Embassy assist in the renegotiation of an informal arrangement between the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch of the Central Intelligence Group and the British Broadcasting Corporation for the exchange of monitored foreign broadcasts.

During the war the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch, which was then called the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service, had an informal reciprocal arrangement with the British Broadcasting Corporation whereby foreign broadcasts monitored by the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch and the British Broadcasting Corporation would be freely interchanged. The purpose of the arrangement was to effect economies by dividing the operation of world-wide monitoring and eliminating unnecessary duplication. The British Broadcasting Corporation is now providing the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch with the product of its European monitoring and the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch is giving the British Broadcasting Corporation in return a relatively small file of Middle Eastern broadcast material, which is monitored by the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch Mission at Cairo. The present reciprocal arrangement gives the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch far more material from the British than is given to the British. More specifically the British Broadcasting Corporation provides the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch with approximately 75,000 words of broadcast text each day, whereas the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch Mission in Cairo supplies the British with less than 15,000 words of broadcast text each day.

The British Broadcasting Corporation has informally expressed to the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch its desire to equalize the reciprocal arrangement by having the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch provide the British Broadcasting Corporation with material from the Far East and Latin America which it is impossible for the British Broadcasting Corporation to monitor in the United Kingdom. The Foreign Broadcast Information Branch understands that the Foreign Office has given the British Broadcasting Corporation its approval in principle to the continuance of a reciprocal arrangement between the two monitoring operations. It is to the

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interest of the United States Government to enter into such an arrangement with the British Broadcasting Corporation because if the British Broadcasting Corporation refused to turn over to the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch the product of its European monitoring, it would cost the United States Government at least \$1,000,000 a year to duplicate the British Broadcasting Corporation's European monitoring operation.

At the present time the Embassy in Cairo is negotiating with the Egyptian Government to obtain its permission for the continued operation of the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch monitoring station in Egypt. If this permission is not granted by the Egyptian Government, the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch desires, as part of the new reciprocal arrangement, British approval of moving the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch monitoring station from Cairo to Cyprus.

In order to equalize the proposed reciprocal arrangement from the standpoint of the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch, it is desired that the British handle Foreign Broadcast Information Branch communications (10,000 words per day) from the Middle East to London via British Signal Corps radio teletype facilities. The Foreign Broadcast Information Branch is using commercial channels from Cairo to London at the present time but cannot continue to pay the cost of these facilities. If the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch Middle Eastern monitoring station remains in Cairo the traffic might be handled by the British Signal Corps center at Fayid. If the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch must move from Cairo to Cyprus, it is desired that the British agree either to handle Foreign Broadcast Information Branch communications from Cyprus to London or to permit the erection of a radio transmitter on Cyprus to send the monitored material to Frankfurt for relay to London.

Any such reciprocal arrangement would be informal and merely an operating understanding. However, the officers of the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch have been informally advised by the British Broadcasting Corporation that it will be necessary for the British Broadcasting Corporation to have an approval in principle by the Foreign Office, and probably the War Office, to the desired commitment for the Middle East. The Foreign Broadcast Information Branch desires that the arrangement be negotiated as soon as possible in order that it may know its commitments prior to the end of the present fiscal year. [redacted] Chief of the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch, and [redacted] Chief of the Central Intelligence Group Communication Division, will arrive in London early in April to negotiate the details of the reciprocal arrangement at the operating level. The Embassy is, therefore, requested to assist these officials in every way possible to obtain from the British Government approval of the informal reciprocal arrangement outlined herein.

For the Embassy's further information, the following detailed operational plan for reciprocity is proposed by the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch:

1. Service provided the United States by the United Kingdom:
 - a. The monitored text consisting of roughly 75,000 words daily providing adequate coverage of medium wave and

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low powered short wave foreign broadcast interceptions from Europe. This would be made available to the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch editors in London as at present.

b. Transmission via British Signal Corps facilities of 10,000 words daily of Foreign Broadcast Information Branch traffic from its Middle Eastern monitoring station to London.

(1) If the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch remains in Cairo it is hoped that this traffic could be handled through the British Signal Center at Fayid.

(2) If the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch is forced to move from Cairo to Cyprus, this traffic could be handled either by British communications facilities on Cyprus or by a transmitter erected on Cyprus.

c. Authorization and assistance by the British for the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch to install a Middle Eastern monitoring station on the Island of Cyprus if such a move becomes necessary as a result of pressure from the Egyptian Government. This station would contain approximately 65 employees.

2. Service provided the United Kingdom by the United States:

a. A copy sent to London of the foreign broadcast material monitored at the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch listening Post in the Middle East.

b. A 25,000 word daily file of broadcast material monitored by the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch from Latin America and the Far East. The communication costs for this file would be borne by the United States.

For your information, the above arrangement would be effective during the fiscal year 1948, assuming that the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch receives sufficient funds from the Congress to carry out these commitments.

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The Embassy may obtain additional background and details on this matter from [redacted] Chief, Foreign Broadcast Information Branch Mission in London at 31 Davies Street, London, W. 1.

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